

[W. A. Wood]

1

EARLY SETTLEMENT

William V. Ervin, P. W.

Somervell County

District # 8 Pioneer History Life [S-230?]

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Page 1

Reference

Interview with W. A. Wood, Glen Rose, Texas- Early Settler

"My father brought the family to Texas, to what is now Somervell county in 1874, when I was twelve years old. When we reached the Brazos River it was up, there was no bridge, and no ferry. We built a skiff to cross but we had to leave all our things on the other side until the river went down, when we could bring them across in the wagon.

We settled on the land along the river where we landed. Nearly everybody lived in log houses. We built a house of cedar logs. The living room had a puncheon floor, and the kitchen had a dirt floor. We came from Arkansas, and we had a well-built house there. I didn't see how we were going to live in this log house, but we were comfortable. The log houses were not as tight as lumber houses, but/ we were seldom sick.

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People were friendly and glad to see you. If you went to see anybody and stayed a week, they wanted you to stay longer.

The land was good and would raise almost anything. Crops were generally good. The land is not as good now as it was then. It has washed away. I can show you places where good land has been washed away and now there are big gullies. C12- Texas

When we came there were, at Barnard's Mill (which is what the place was called then), the mill, a dry goods store owned 2 by Mr. Brown, a little store which sold groceries and cigars and tobacco owned by Mr. White, and a blacksmith shop run by a man named Levindusky.

Before we came there had been a small settlement or village over a mile further east on Paluxy Creek where there was a large sulphur spring. It moved to Barnard's Mill after the mill was built.

The county was organized in 1875, and that year, or a year later, Baldy Martin put up the first cotton gin. It had only one little stand. It was operated by a big cog, which was pulled around by a team of mules. There were four mules used altogether in running the gin. Two would pull the cotton up to a platform where a man would stand and push the cotton into the gin with his hands.

Buyers would come from Dallas and Fort Worth and buy the cotton in the yard, but we would have to deliver it. It would take two days to go to Fort Worth and three days to go to Dallas, if the weather was good. One time when it wasn't good, we were twelve days on the road to Dallas. What cottonseed that wasn't needed for replanting was thrown away. It was not needed to feed livestock as there was plenty of pasturage.

Buryers would come out and buy cattle and hogs, and we would deliver them. 3 Major T. C. Jordan bought the mill from Charles Barnard and later started the town of Glen Rose. I drove a freight wagon wagon for Major Jordan, hauling flour to Waco, Dallas and Fort Worth, and returning with goods. Everything went along all right on these trips, except

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one night when the two other drivers and I were camped, we got drunk and mixed peach brandy and cherry brandy.”